TO

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,

AT EIGHTY YEARS,

FROM HIS

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN.

NEW YORK:
SCRIBNER, ARMSTRONG & CO.,
743 AND 745 BROADWAY.
1876.

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THE BRYANT VASE

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PRESENTATION

TO

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,

June 20th, at 8 P.M., Chickering Hall.

MUSIC.

RECEPTION OF THE COMMEMORATIVE VASE FROM THE MAKERS BY THE COMMITTEE.

MUSIC.

PRESENTATION TO MR. BRYANT, WITH AN ADDRESS BY THE CHAIRMAN.

ADDRESS BY MR. BRYANT.

MUSIC.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE AUDIENCE TO EXAMINE THE VASE.

MR. GEORGE WILLIAM WARREN PRESENTED HIS SERVICES AT THE ORGAN.

BRYANT TESTIMONIAL COMMITTEE.

SAMUEL OSGOOD, Chairman.

DANIEL HUNTINGTON,
JOHN TAYLOR JOHNSTON,
BAYARD TAYLOR,
JOHN BIGELOW,
WILLIAM H. APPLETON,
ASHER B. DURAND,
JOSEPH H. CHOATE,
WILLIAM M. EVARTS,
GEORGE RIPLEY,
HENRY E. PIERREPONT,
FREDERICK STURGES,
J. PIERPONT MORGAN,
S. J. TILDEN,
F. A. P. BARNARD,
R. S. STORRS,
BENJAMIN H. FIELD,
HENRY W. BELLOWS,
HOWARD CROSBY,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
FREDERICK DE PEYSTER,
HENRY C. POTTER,
WILLIAM ADAMS,
A. A. LOW,
FRANKLIN H. DELANO,
WILLIAM J. HOPPIN,
J. G. HOLLAND,
JOHN A. WEEKS,
HENRY W. FOOTE, Boston.
JAMES T. FIELDS, "
JAMES R. OSGOOD,
NOAH PORTER, New Haven.
CHAS R. INGERSOLL, "

EDWIN HARWOOD.....New Haven.
JAMES L. CLAGHORN.....Philadelphia.
GEORGE W. CHILDS..... "
JOHN WELSH ..... "
JAMES H. LATROBE .....Baltimore.
EDWIN C. LARNED.....Chicago.
ROBERT COLLYER..... "
WM. G. ELIOT.....St. Louis.
CARL SCHURZ..... "
WILLIAM T. SHERMAN.....Washington.
HENRY PROBASCO.....Cincinnati.
OGDEN HOFFMAN.....San Francisco.
GEO. F. HOAR.....Worcester.
ALEXANDER H. BULLOCK..... "
MARK HOPKINS.....Williamstown.
J. R. HAWLEY.....Hartford.

GEORGE CABOT WARD, Treasurer.

WENTWORTH S. BUTLER, Secretary.

PRESENTATION

OF

THE BRYANT VASE.

JUNE 20TH, 1876.

OPENING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN.

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: This occasion, that calls us together to do honor to our distinguished guest, is of a most genial and festive nature, yet none the less, on that account, may we regard it as having its serious aspects. Surely a life so long and so faithful as his, lifts us up by its very presence, and I know that it is proof alike of respect for his character and for your wishes and your disposition, to open these proceedings devoutly. These verses are from hymns in which our poet himself serves us as our chaplain:

"Hear this call to our nation to give glory to the God of our fathers, and to His beloved Son:

"'Oh, North, with all thy vales of green!
Oh, South, with all thy palms!
From peopled towns and fields between,
Uplift the voice of psalms.

Raise, Ancient East! the anthem high,
And let the youthful West reply.

"'Lo! in the clouds of Heaven appears
God's well-beloved Son;
He brings a train of brighter years;
His Kingdom is begun;
He comes a guilty world to bless
With mercy, truth, and righteousness.'

"Again let us follow our poet in his prayer for wisdom from above:

"'Mighty One, before whose face
Wisdom had her glorious seat,
When the orbs that people space
Sprang to birth beneath thy feet!

"'Source of Truth, whose beams alone
Light the mighty world of mind!
God of Love, who, from thy throne,
Watchest over all mankind!

"'Shed on these who, in thy name,
Teach the way of truth and right,
Shed that Love's undying flame,
Shed that Wisdom's guiding light.'

"Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, with God's blessing upon us, let us turn to the first business of the evening, and receive from the makers the beautiful work of art which is to be presented to our guest. This, indeed, is not the harvest-time of

nature, and the fields are not yet ripe for the sickle and the scythe ; but art has all seasons for her own, and here a rich fruit is brought to us from her ever-teeming fields, by the hands of the producers themselves. Honor to the skilled and industrious workmen, and let honor go with their hire to fill out their just reward.

"Mr. Whitehouse and Gentlemen, Artists and Workmen, we now look to you to unvail your work, and to allow the Bryant Testimonial Committee to receive it from your hands for its high purpose."

THE REMARKS OF MR. WHITEHOUSE, THE DESIGNER OF THE VASE, ON PRESENTING IT TO THE COMMITTEE.

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Committee : We are here to-night at your request to formally make over to you the Testimonial Vase on which we have been so long engaged; and the house I represent has seen fit to place it in my hands for that purpose.

"Before doing so, I must thank you in the name of our firm for having intrusted us with so important and interesting a piece of work ; interesting indeed, for no testimonial piece was ever made in this country in which, so far as the silver-

smith community is concerned, such wide-spread interest has been shown. One cause of this was the long roll of distinguished names of which the Committee is formed; the other and chief cause was the knowledge that it was to be presented to so upright and beloved a citizen, to so charming, truthful, and distinguished a poet. We are all proud of our connection with it, from the honored head of our house to the very boy who helped to place the silver in the crucible. Every stroke of the pencil, every thought, every touch of the modeling stick, every blow of the hammer has been indeed a work of love.

"I must also thank you in behalf of the actual workers on this vase, who, at your invitation, are here to-night. This, to me, is a very pleasing feature of the evening's programme, for it is a feature too often overlooked. The art-worker in silver—the *successful* art-worker in silver—must possess ability of the highest order. He is just as much an artist in his particular line as the painter or sculptor. He is equally enthusiastic, bringing up with the hammer from the dead surface of the metal objects of life and inspiration; day by day and week by week his interest growing with his work; going home at night to the equally interested and anxious wife, who in her pride and innocence

thinks the time has come at last, and soon the town will ring with the praises of her John. But alas, false hopes! the piece is finished, the presentation takes place, the work is admired, the giver and receiver are both glorified; but John, poor John, he is never even dreamed of, and the wife can't understand it; she thinks there must be something wrong. You, gentlemen, have been the first in this country to look beyond the surface; you have torn down this vail of seclusion, and brought the art-workman and his merit to the front. In this particular instance, the silent consciousness of having been engaged on a testimonial to the father of our country's poetry, was in itself reward enough; and we thank you, every one of us, firm, designer, modeler, maker, and chaser, for having given us the opportunity to lay this our one small green leaf tribute at his feet.

"Gentlemen, in the name of Tiffany & Co., I make over to you the Bryant Testimonial Vase."

DR. OSGOOD'S ADDRESS TO THE MAKERS OF THE VASE.

"Mr. Whitehouse and Fellow-Artists and Workmen: Your speech is short, but your art is long, and this beautiful work of your heads and hands speaks louder than any ambitious words, and

speaks for itself. In the name of the Bryant Testimonial Committee I thank you for your presence here to-night, with this masterpiece of your taste and skill. The design is apt and original, worthy of the subject and the occasion. The work is careful and exquisite, and every line and feature is proof to all, of what some of us know from observation, that heart as well as time has gone into your toil, and that you have entered into the spirit of this commemorative gift to the patriarch of American letters. I thank you each and all; and I thank also your employers, who have done their part with such courtesy, enterprise, and public spirit. These gentlemen are supposed to understand their business, as we have here ample proof, and we all know that their prosperous house will not suffer by their generous execution of the order committed to them; but it is cheering to know that they interpret business on so high a plane, and carry into it so much of the sentiment of beauty, and the heart of patriotism and humanity.

"This personal acknowledgment is cordial and just, but it is not all that it is proper for me to say to you now. You have not only done honor to yourselves, but to your art—even to the ancient and honorable art of the goldsmith and the silversmith—and you have done your part to put it where it

belongs in the fellowship of useful and beautiful arts. All the arts belong together, and it has been well said that art is one, while its instruments are many. Art is one, and its aim is to give life and force to knowledge, and to render into action the science which is light. The Spirit of the living God who called the Cosmos out of Chaos, and who is ever making the many into one, is the great Master of Arts, and has given your craft of metal-workers especial commission, as when of old He called Bezaleel the son of Uri to his service and said: 'I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.' Why wonder at the consecration of your craft? Why make light of your art, which now, as in the time of the old tabernacle and temple, can so embody and interpret the affections of the household, the loyalty of the nation, the wisdom of the schools, and the sanctities of the altar? How much of the mind and heart of mankind has been perpetuated in gold and silver and bronze, and precious stones! From the plain gold ring and the christening token to

the seal of covenants and cup of Communion, how your work rises in dignity, and lifts the metals of the earth toward the soul of man and the image of God! How much of high history lives in metal-work, and how many noble statues of sages, prophets, and heroes rise before us to-night as we add this memorial work of yours to the treasures of art and to the annals of culture!

"How nobly your art is ministering now to the harmony of nations at our great Centennial jubilee of industry and taste, and bringing offerings in brass and iron, silver and gold, from all lands to join their gifts to yours! How grand is the conception of the monument of Liberty, which France asks to place upon an island in our harbor—the colossal statue with hand uplifting the torch which throws cheer upon the sailor's benighted way, and the head crowned with rays that flash light upon the dark waters, and inspire hope in all who despair! God guard beautiful France, and secure to her the Liberty that she sends now as of old to us!

"One thought more and I close this acknowledgment. Your work is honorable to yourself and to your art, and in connection with your presence here, it tells upon the future of humanity and the progress of civilization. You are here, artists and workmen, with your wives and children, and your

employers are with you, and we are all one in the generous spirit of the occasion. Let this be a prophecy of the good future of labor in its relations with skill and capital. Many perplexing questions are connected with this subject, and I cannot argue them now, nor can I expose the fearful mistakes that have so often wrecked labor in the name of friendship, and betrayed the workman with a kiss. The age of true co-operation must come, and this beautiful work is one of the signs of its promise. A hundred years ago, Adam Smith, who had before written of sympathy as the ground of moral sentiment, published his 'Wealth of Nations,' that great charter of the dignity of labor; and that same year, Benjamin Franklin, who had taught workmen sobriety and thrift, signed the Declaration of Independence that made us a nation. Adam Smith and Benjamin Franklin are in the air here to-night, and they help us in our presentation of this vase to William Cullen Bryant, who wears their mantle in his purpose and his thought.

"Let the organ sound the hopes that I cannot speak; and I leave to the organist, who has the Bunker Hill blood and name that went through the fire of battle, to touch the notes of love and life, that mean the peace of nations, the fellowship of the arts, and the brotherhood of mankind."

DR. OSGOOD'S ADDRESS TO MR. BRYANT.

"We and our children have received many and precious gifts from you, Mr. Bryant; and now we bring a gift to you in return, not to cancel, but to express our obligation. This piece of silver means you and what we owe to you; and as we now present it, we take the liberty to interpret its significance.

"This occasion is the sequel and fulfillment of our interview with you November 3d, 1874, when, headed by Mr. Jonathan Sturges, your old and devoted friend, whose name now brightens the record of our best citizens, noblest patriots, and most humane and godly men, we paid our respects to you upon the eightieth anniversary of your birthday, and announced to you this tribute of honor. This work of art has thus a memorial meaning, and it recounts the more than fourscore years of your life, and makes your age stand for the age in which we live.

"Permit us then first of all to salute in you the goodly spirit of the age which you represent, and to see the nineteenth, with six years of the eighteenth century, looking down upon us from your honored head.

"You came into this troubled world at a signal

period, when mighty forces were in deadly conflict, and you have done your work as at once a liberator and a peacemaker, an assailant of tyranny and a champion of law, a leader of light and liberty, and of reverence and faith. When you were born, Robespierre and his crew had just fallen under the guillotine, and Napoleon was a young adventurer, writing of 'life as a flimsy dream soon to be over,' and suspected of sympathizing with the destructives. He lived to be First Consul, then Emperor, and to boast of putting the crown of empire upon the head of the Revolution. He has gone, and the second and the third Napoleon after him. You have lived to assist in putting upon the head of Revolution the crown of order, and in our second or renewed republic you have made your pen mightier than the sword in defense of the oppressed, in the restraint of the proud, in breaking the shackles of the slave, and bringing master and servant, rich and poor, under the rule of equal law. This medallion of the old-fashioned printing press, in connection with this design illustrating your career as a journalist, marks well this part of your life, and we salute you as representative of the Press, the Free Press, now the great power on earth, and the greater always as freedom goes hand in hand with justice and truth.

"We salute in you this good spirit of the age, and we honor your part in its literature as well as its law. When you came into the world the storm-spirits were abroad in letters, and were rising in number and power, in spite of the reaction against the reign of terror. Byron was a child of six years, and Shelley an infant of two, and Coleridge and Wordsworth, young men of twenty-four, were still in the unrest and frenzy of radicalism, and had neither found each other nor the faith and love that so exalted them and the new literature which they founded. The masters of German literature, Goethe and Schiller, were friends and fellow-workers, but little known to the great world, and with hardly a public to appreciate them in the Germany that had been so much under the thought, as well as the power, of Frederick the Great. Your life belongs to the great record, and you rank with the spirits of light and reconciliation that led on the Renaissance from the night of bigotry and skepticism. You belong to the goodly company who with Wordsworth and his fellows opened to men the life of nature and the truth of God. It is a simple fact for me to say that you began our new American literature, and that, although not eldest in years, you are eldest in authorship among the poets of America.

"This sculptured harp, with its neighbor the book decked with the lily, tells well the story of the spirit of your school of poetry and letters; and in you we welcome your goodly fellowship of our American poets. How great the contrast between your rendering of nature and life and that of the school of liberalism that went before! Who can withhold admiration from Rousseau, the champion of nature against artifice, or refuse to acknowledge the great work of liberation that he did? Yet how full of grossness were his pages and his life. What relief there is in our liberty to love nature with you, and to read no line, which, dying, you might wish to blot.

"We salute you thus as the representative of our home literature as well as of the culture of the age. Great names had gone before, and the Revolution produced masters of prose speech under the lead of Franklin, their chief, and Jefferson, Madison, Jay, Hamilton, and their associates in his company. As we pay our respects to you, the poets and authors whom you have known and honored stand with you, and they that have passed away speak to us again. Irving, Cooper, Halleck, Verplanck, Prescott, and all are here, and the living join in honor to the dead. Dana, now on the threshold of fourscore and ten years, Longfellow,

Whittier, and Emerson, rich in genius as ripe in years, with the brilliant fellowship of younger poets, come before us now and win our gratitude for their treasures of beauty and wisdom. How pure our poets have been in life, and how pure the speech which they have set to music for the tongue of the nation! You, sir, have done more than we can say to form our language, and we, who have caught pure diction as well as stirring thought and winning sentiment from your poems in our school days, are glad indeed to set our thanks before you in this expressive gift, with its lessons from the nature that you have interpreted, the country that you have served, and the literature that you have formed.

"One thing let us say, which this vase signifies by its Greek severity and by its Gothic lines of interlacing branches and upward pointing. This means the union of the Greek culture with the Hebrew faith, the culture that delights in nature and humanity, and the faith that never forgets the God over all, never loses the Great First Cause in pantheist visions or humanitarian pride. There may be more delirium and inebriation in other schools of poetry, whether in sensual madness or mystical absorption, but we part with our birthright when we desert the God of our fathers and set

nature or man on His throne. We congratulate you that, in the whole round of your service as poet, journalist, historian, jurist, teacher of political and social science, you have stood by essential ethics, and never deserted the faith.

"It only remains for me to say that this gift expresses, also, our respect and affection for you as our friend and fellow-citizen. Many offerings, great and small, are in this piece of silver, and they come from all parts of the country, not without complaint that more was not called for. We who live in and around New York have not been behindhand in this tribute, and we enter into this presentation with peculiar earnestness. You are our neighbor and companion, and for more than fifty years you have taken interest in the welfare of this city, and helped us in every way. We can all join in this deference, whether native or foreign born, Knickerbockers or New-Englanders, Eastern, Western, Northern, or Southern, for we all know you and respect you. You have helped turn out the knaves and put honest men into power. You stood by the old flag in the great struggle when 'God and Our Country' was the motto, and you are standing by it now when 'Honest Men and Honest Money' is the issue of the time. You have not shrunk from the duty that now so presses

upon us—the duty of charity and justice to those who have been our enemies; and you counsel conciliation without cowardice, whilst you give the same rights that you ask—the right of each State to control its own affairs under the Constitution that makes the nation supreme in its own sphere. Here, too, these sculptures speak the lesson of the hour, and speak of you. The cotton and the corn here come together, and the bird of peace is singing between the two. May the promise be fulfilled, and North and South not only hear but repeat the same song of loyalty, the same hymn of faith and good-will!

"You have not lost ground by living with us, and you have risen from a young man of thirty to a full-grown man, I will not say an old man, of over eighty, as hearty and active as ever. You have seen the city double its numbers and wealth many times, not without some signs of growth in wisdom as well as bulk. We have been in some respects a little more fast than your advice and example taught us to be, but in being generally cheerful we have followed your lead, and kept up a brave heart through all changes of fortune. We are glad to have you with us to cheer us on to the great future as we turn the leaf of a new century. You still live the life which this vase embodies. You

still see and enjoy the charm of nature; the gentian, the violet, the primrose, and the apple-blossom delight you as ever; you hear the hymn of the forest and the song of the stars; the merry Robert of Lincoln sings for you his genial glee, and the solemn water-fowl preaches faith with untiring wing. Your muse, that began with 'Thanatopsis,' promises to make 'Athanasia' her swan song as the lengthening shadows point toward morning.

"Accept this gift, with all its sculptures and memorials, the study of many thoughtful hours and the trophy of more than a thousand days' work, all throbbing with heart-beats, as at once our record and our blessing. This exquisite form brings beauty from the land of old Homer to join with truth and grace from our new America in celebrating your birthday. It means more than we can say. But we can say, for our country and for ourselves, that it means, 'God bless you, Mr. Bryant.'"

MR. BRYANT'S ADDRESS.

"I shall begin what I have to say with thanks, and with thanks I shall end it—thanks to my excellent friends who have concurred in the presentation of this beautiful vase, thanks to the artists by

whom it is designed and executed, thanks to my friend the chairman of the Committee for the obliging expressions with which he has accompanied the presentation, and thanks to this fair audience for the encouragement of their presence. After expressing my acknowledgments for the honor done me, it would be easiest for me to take refuge in silence; but this would hardly become me after the kind words addressed to me and the superb gift offered to my acceptance. I fear that I might be accused of imitating an example of which I remember to have read some forty years since. A volunteer military company in a provincial town of England on a time presented their captain with a silver pitcher. The non-commissioned officer who presented it, approaching his commander, held it out to him and said, 'Captain, here's the jug.' To this the captain replied, 'Ay, is that the jug?' and there the speech-making ended, and the company were ready for the festivities of the evening. I am afraid that a similar condensation of what I have to say might be as ridiculous.

"Mr. Chairman of the Committee, and you, my good friends who have done me the honor to be here, I would not have you understand that I have the great presumption to take the obliging things said of me as my due, or this superb gift before me

as earned by any service which I have rendered in any quarter. I wish I deserved it all, but, knowing better in my heart, I put a large balance—a very large one—to the credit of your generosity. What merit would be yours if I had fairly earned all that you are bestowing upon me? You would be simply doing your duty; you would be paying a debt. I should have no thanks to give, and you no honor for your benefaction. But consider it in the other light: suppose that I receive these testimonials of your kindness without having earned them, and this proceeding becomes an act of munificence, noble, princely, imperial—a munificence deserving to be extolled in the choicest phrases which language can supply, inasmuch as it is like the bounty which showers the genial rain and pours the sweet sunshine on the unjust as well as the just, and under the influence of benignant seasons ripens the harvests of the field for Tweed as well as for Dr. Muhlenberg.

"And now a word concerning the superb vase which is before me, the work of artists who are the worthy successors of Benvenuto Cellini, and eminent in their department. It has been greatly admired by those who have seen it, and deserves their admiration. I remember to have read, I think some half a century ago, a definition of the

term genius—making it to consist in the faculty of accomplishing great results by small means—the power, in short, which an individual has of overcoming difficulties by a forecast and vigor not possessed by others, converting obstacles into instruments of success. This vase I may call a product of genius, both in the design and the execution; for who would suppose that any skill of the artist could connect with such a subject as he had before him images so happily conceived, so full of expression, and so well combining expression with grace? My friends, we authors cultivate a short-lived reputation; one generation of us pushes another from the stage; the very language in which we write becomes a jargon, and we cease to be read; but a work like this is always beautiful, always admired. Age has no power over its charm. Hereafter some one may say, 'This beautiful vase was made in honor of a certain American poet, whose name it bears, but whose writings are forgotten. It is remarkable that so much pains should have been taken to illustrate the life and writings of one whose works are so completely unknown at the present day.' Thus, gentlemen artists, I shall be indebted to you for causing the memory of my name to outlast that of my writings."

APPENDIX.

THE PRESENTATION.
DESCRIPTION OF THE VASE.
THE BIRTHDAY VISIT.
TRIBUTES OF THE PRESS.

APPENDIX.

THERE having been a general desire that the proceedings connected with the recent tribute of honor to Mr. Bryant should be preserved in permanent and suitable form, they have been collected together with the approval of the parties concerned, and they are now published with the authority of the Executive Committee who had charge of the preparation and presentation of the Testimonial. This publication is purely a historical record, and its aim is not to express opinions, but simply to chronicle facts. The record speaks for itself, and it is not necessary to prove that the occasion is not only a tribute to one man, but to the whole national literature which he represents, and that thus these proceedings form an interesting chapter of American history.

In completing their task, the Committee have the satisfaction of reporting to the subscribers that after paying five thousand dollars for the Vase, according to contract, and meeting all demands for incidental expenses, they found in the treasurer's

hands the sum of one hundred and ninety-nine dollars and fifty cents, which they were happy to send to the Rev. Dr. Muhlenberg, as a donation toward the comprehensive and unsectarian charities of St. Luke's Hospital. They take pleasure also in the enterprise and public spirit of Messrs. Tiffany & Company, who expended on the Vase more than double the amount of money received by them according to contract, and who are content, as they have reason to be, with their reward in their own professional feeling, and before the tribunal of public opinion. Their work will speak for them and their art in the years that are to come. The Committee have transmitted to Mr. Bryant the full title to the Vase, with the simple request that when he ceases to have it in charge, his heirs may be instructed by him to have it kept in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or a similar institution, where posterity may learn in what esteem he was held in his own generation.

The documents which are here added are from the journals of the day, and are published in order to complete the account.

Samuel Osgood,
Joseph H. Choate,
George Cabot Ward.

ITS PRESENTATION—ADDRESSES BY DR. OSGOOD, MR. WHITEHOUSE, MR. BRYANT, AND OTHERS.

THE Testimonial Vase which was tendered to William Cullen Bryant, on his eightieth birthday, by a large Committee of prominent persons in this and other cities, was formally presented to him at Chickering Hall last evening. The hall was filled by a remarkably brilliant company of ladies and gentlemen, including many of distinction in various walks of life. Among the persons present were Charles O'Conor, Peter Cooper, A. A. Low, Parke Godwin, Daniel Huntington, John Taylor Johnston, William H. Appleton, Joseph H. Choate, Frederick Sturges, J. Pierpont Morgan, George Cabot Ward, Henry W. Bellows, Howard Crosby, J. G. Holland, Theodore Roosevelt, F. A. P. Barnard, William J. Hoppin, the Rev. Dr. Henry C. Potter, Henry E. Pierrepont, the Rev. Dr. Mendes, Jackson S. Schultz, Bayard Taylor, Comptroller Green, and many others equally well known to the public. Letters of regret were received from Bishop Potter, General Sherman, Dr. John Hall, Carl Schurz, the Rev. Robert Collyer, and others.

"Hail to the Chief" was played upon the organ by George William Warren, as Mr. Bryant was conducted to the platform by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Osgood, and the whole audience rose. Dr. Osgood, as Chairman of the Testimonial Commit-

tee, then made a few remarks in regard to the object of the assembly.

James H. Whitehouse, of Tiffany & Co., next presented the Vase to the Committee on behalf of the makers. He said that he was proud to hand over so fine a piece of workmanship for so noble a purpose. He created considerable merriment by reminding his hearers that the men who really did all the labor on a work of art like the Vase, seldom or never got any credit for their pains, or were seldom even heard of; and in order to make an exception to a general rule, he said that the men who had done the entire work on the Vase were present, and he felt certain they would not be overlooked in the general praisegivings. At the request of Dr. Osgood, the five workmen who were on the stage stood up, and were received with hearty applause. The address of Mr. Whitehouse was very appropriate and graceful.

Dr. Osgood spoke as already reported on receiving the Vase.

After the rendering of some national airs on the organ, Dr. Osgood presented the Vase to Mr. Bryant in the speech as printed.

Applause followed, and "See the Conquering Hero Comes" was played upon the organ. Mr. Bryant then advanced to respond, and was received with long-continued applause.

Mr. Bryant's address was received with loud applause. The exercises on the programme were then ended by some organ selections, but there

were loud calls from the audience for Joseph H. Choate, who was upon the platform. Mr. Choate at length said that he did not wish to detain the company by any words of his, but he could say that the thousand people gathered there represented not only all the people of this country, but all who spoke and wrote the English tongue, in their feelings toward the venerable and distinguished poet. The American people were proud of their productions. They were proud of their great statesmen and great warriors, but most of all of their great poets. The works of American authors, of Bryant, of Longfellow, of Whittier, and Holmes, were to be found in every drawing-room in the British empire, and no one could now ask, "Who reads an American book?" He advised the persons present to take this opportunity for "shaking hands with our honored friend, and examining this beautiful Vase."

A large part of the audience then advanced to the platform to congratulate Mr. Bryant and to inspect the silver Vase, a full description of which has been published.

It was announced by Dr. Osgood that, with Mr. Bryant's permission, the Vase would be taken to the Centennial Exhibition.—*The Evening Post*, June 21, 1876.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VASE.

(From Harper's Magazine for July, 1876.)

* * * It was thought by the friends of William Cullen Bryant in this city that some tribute of respect was due to him when he reached eighty years of age, and the suggestion was made by one among them that a commemorative Vase, of appropriate original design and choice workmanship, would be the best form of the intended tribute, especially since Mr. Bryant did not need any material aid, and, moreover, the sculptor and painter and engraver and publisher had already conspicuously paid their respects to him. Our leading artists and men of taste were consulted, and the plan of a commemorative Vase was approved and acted upon. * * *

As the Vase required much time for its completion, no effort was made to have it ready for presentation then, but immediately afterward effective measures were taken to carry out the assurance contained in the address by completing the subscription of five thousand dollars, and securing the best design. The field of competition was thrown open to the whole craft of silversmiths, and while the first attempts showed crudeness and inexperience, and not a few persons declared it to be

impossible for our designers and workmen to make a first-class work of ideal and historical art such as would be fit for presentation to the patriarch of American letters, the final result removed all these misgivings, and the fine designs that were offered at the closing competition in February, 1875, put all fears at rest, and proved that our silversmiths were up to the best standard of their guild, and that, with full preparation and fair notice, they can do as good work in their way as is done anywhere in the world. All the designs were creditable to their authors, and the specimens of modeling in wax and of casting and chasing in metal-work were interesting and encouraging. The design of Mr. Whitehouse, of the house of Tiffany & Co., was accepted unanimously, alike from its beauty and its fitness, while the other designs were carefully examined, generously appreciated, and the public were encouraged to study their merits by friendly comments from the Committee, and by articles in the newspapers and illustrations in the magazines. Our readers have now an opportunity to judge for themselves of the merits of the successful design, and the visitors at the Centennial Exposition are seeing the work itself with their own eyes.

It is not a very ambitious production, and in its

severity of form and in its careful and exquisite details there is a combination of simplicity and beauty which belongs to the subject, and which ventures upon no point which cannot be thoroughly worked out. This piece of silver means William Cullen Bryant, the living father of our literature, and it suggests the America in which he has lived and labored and sung. The artist, Mr. James H. Whitehouse, well expressed the spirit of his work in his remarks before the Committee, when he said: "When the Bryant Testimonial was first mentioned to me, my thoughts at once flew to the country—to the crossing of the boughs of trees, to the plants and flowers, and to a general contemplation of Nature; and these, together with a certain Homeric influence, produced in my mind the germ of the design—the form of a Greek vase, with the most beautiful American flowers growing round and entwining themselves gracefully about it, each breathing its own particular story as it grew."

Thus it is that the Vase is entirely covered with a fret-work formed of apple-branches and their blossoms, or a delicate basket-work from the apple-tree, which so well expresses Mr. Bryant's poetry in its fragant bloom and its wholesome fruit. Beneath this fret-work, and forming the finer lines of

its fret, are the primrose and the amaranth, which out of the lips of their loveliness speak their lessons of inspiration and of immortality. The body of the Vase, which is thus formed and enriched, bears expressive and elaborate medallions of the poet, and of the main aspects of his life and works. The most prominent of these medallions is the portrait bust. Above his head is the lyre, which represents his art, and below is the printing-press in its primitive form, which suggests his career of journalism, while more prominent still, farther below, is the elaborate and beautiful design of the water-fowl, which so presents God over Nature in the charming and exalting poem of that name. On the opposite side of the Vase there is a carefully designed and executed study of Poetry contemplating Nature—two female figures, which balance wisely the somewhat severely masculine character of the other designs, and give their womanly grace to the honor of the poet whose life and works so well harmonize in respect for woman, and for the home, marriage, and religion that give her the best defense and power. Between these two principal medallions there are on each side two groups illustrating scenes in the poet's life, making four groups in all. The first group presents him in company with his

father, who points to Homer as a model in poetic composition:

> "For he is in his grave who taught my youth
> The art of verse, and in the bud of life
> Offered me to the Muses."

The next group presents him as the student of Nature, such as he appears in "Thanatopsis" or "A Forest Hymn":

> "Stranger, if thou hast learned a truth which needs
> No school of long experience, that the world
> Is full of guilt and misery, and hast seen
> Enough of all its sorrows, crimes, and cares
> To tire thee of it, enter this wild wood
> And view the haunts of Nature."

The third design illustrates his life as journalist; and the fourth represents him in his good old age as translator of the Iliad and the Odyssey. The lower part of the bowl bears ornamentation from the characteristic products of American agriculture—cotton and Indian corn. The neck is encircled with primrose and ivy in token of youth and old age, while the "fringed gentian" suggests the grave thought from its blue petals:

> "I would that thus, when I shall see
> The hour of death draw near to me,
> Hope, blossoming within my heart,
> May look to heaven as I depart."

The famous line, "Truth crushed to earth shall rise again," is also given here in the form of an ornamental border inlaid in gold. The ornament at the foot of the bowl is the water-lily, the emblem of fluency and eloquence. The handles are richly decorated with the fern, the cotton, and Indian corn, while the bobolink represents the whole tribe of his fellow-singers, and does honor to the poet and to his humorous verse on "Robert of Lincoln" from his perch. The base bears the lyre and broken shackles, which so represent the poet as patriot and emancipator. The idea of justice as the animating motive of his public career is given in the vigorous handling of the Rudbeckia flower, which is the type of that virtue ; and this idea gains power from the book without a name, and which from its prominent place can be none other than the Book of books.

Such are the form and features of this memorial Vase, and, as in a graceful and spirited man, they make one whole, and the various parts indicate the dominating spirit, the robe of flower-work, with its cincture of medallions, the golden fillet emblazoned with the name of Truth, the arms that hold the emblems of the nation's wealth, the corn and water-lilies at the foot, the solid base with the lyre and broken chain, the bird, the two typical flow-

ers, the printing-press and the Bible—all these details gather around the life which they express, and make this piece of silver a work of ideal and historical art. As a whole, the work has a look of simplicity, and seems easy of execution, yet the process was very laborious and costly; and a careful examination of its various stages and methods, with the help of the best judges and books, justifies the opinion that industrial art in America has taken some steps forward by this tribute, and that success in this instance is likely to tell upon the whole future of the silversmith's craft among us. * * *

1794—1874.

MR. BRYANT'S BIRTHDAY.

A SIMPLE AND NATIONAL COMMEMORATION.

THE eightieth anniversary of the birthday of Mr. Bryant was the occasion yesterday of a greeting of his friends, which partook so much of a public character that a simple narrative of some of the particulars is due to our readers.

An informal meeting of a number of gentlemen was held in this city a few weeks ago, to consider how the general desire to commemorate the anniversary might find a suitable expression. At this

meeting the suggestion was made that a silver vase of original design and choice workmanship, symbolizing in its sculpture the character of Mr. Bryant's life and writings, should be procured by a popular subscription, to be ultimately placed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. By the request of numerous friends of Mr. Bryant, residing both here and elsewhere, the suggestion was also adopted that an address should be drawn for their signature, to express to him their friendship.

In pursuance of the first suggestion, a Committee, of whom the following is a list, were organized to execute the project of the commemorative Vase: Jonathan Sturges, of New York city, Chairman; Samuel Osgood, Daniel Huntington, John Taylor Johnston, William H. Appleton, Asher B. Durand, William T. Blodgett, William M. Evarts, George Ripley, Frederick A. P. Barnard, William Butler Duncan, Benjamin H. Field, Henry W. Bellows, Howard Crosby, Theodore Roosevelt, Frederick De Peyster, Henry C. Potter, William Adams, and Franklin H. Delano, of New York city; Henry E. Pierrepont and A. A. Low, of Brooklyn; John Bigelow, of Highland Falls, N. Y.; Bayard Taylor, of Pennsylvania; Edward Everett Hale, of Boston; Edwin Harwood, of New Haven; James L. Claghorn, of Philadelphia; James H. Latrobe, of Balti-

more; Edwin C. Larned, of Chicago; William G. Eliot, of St. Louis; Henry Probasco, of Cincinnati; Ogden Hoffman, of San Francisco; Alfred Haven, of Portsmouth, N. H.; and George F. Hoar, of Worcester, Mass.; George Cabot Ward, of New York city, Treasurer; Wentworth S. Butler, of New York city, Secretary.

In accordance with the second suggestion, the following address was prepared by the Rev. Dr. Samuel Osgood, for the signature of Mr. Bryant's friends:

"*November* 3, 1874.

"*William Cullen Bryant:*

"HONORED AND DEAR SIR: We, your friends and fellow-citizens, congratulate you upon completing your eightieth year in such vigor of body and mind. We give you our heartiest wishes for your continued health and happiness, and we inform you respectfully of the intention to embody in a commemorative Vase, of original design and choice workmanship, the lessons of your literary and civic career in its relations with our country, whose nature, history, liberty, law, and conscience you have so illustrated. We believe that such a work will be an expressive fact of our coming National Centennial, and a permanent treasure of our Metropolitan Museum of Art. We only add that we

desire that this tribute of gratitude should come from your friends throughout the country, without distinction of party or section, and that our American women shall be encouraged to unite in the act, since our mothers, wives, and daughters are ready to declare their obligation to you for the pure language and sentiment which you have given to the homes and the schools of the nation."

Mr. Bryant was yesterday at work at his editorial desk in the *Evening Post* building until noon. Between 1 and 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Sturges, with many of his associates in the Committee, and other friends, presented to him, at his house in Sixteenth Street in this city, a copy of the address, bearing several hundreds of signatures of names illustrious in almost every honorable pursuit in this community, and at the same time other copies which had up to yesterday morning been returned to the Committee with signatures from Chicago, St. Louis, Philadelphia, and other centers of American population, culture, and enterprise. The proceedings were all simple and informal. Mr. Bryant was accompanied by his daughters—Mrs. Parke Godwin and Miss Julia Bryant—and among the gentlemen in company with Mr. Sturges were the Rev. Drs. William Adams, Henry W. Bellows, Howard Crosby, and Samuel Osgood; Mr. Daniel Hunting-

ton, Mr. Samuel J. Tilden, Mr. A. A. Low, Mr. Benjamin H. Field, Mr. Frederick De Peyster, Mr. George Cabot Ward, Mr. John H. Gourlie, Mr. Albert G. Browne, Jr., Professor Van Amringe, of Columbia College, Mr. Wentworth S. Butler, and Mr. Gilbert L. Beeckman. In delivering to Mr. Bryant the copy of the address, Mr. Sturges said :

" We have come, dear Mr. Bryant, to congratulate you upon reaching the ripe age of eighty years in such vigor of health and intellect ; to thank you for all the good work that you have done for your country and for mankind ; and to give you our best wishes for your happiness. For more than sixty years you have been an author, and from your first publication to your last you have given to us and our children the best thought and sentiment in the purest language of the English-speaking race. For more than fifty years you have been a journalist, and advocated the duties as well as the rights of men, with all the genuine freedom, without any of the license, of our age, in an editorial wisdom that has been a blessing to our daughters as well as our sons. You have been a good citizen and true patriot, ready to bear your testimony to the worth of your great literary contemporaries, and steadfast from first to last in your loyalty to the liberty and order of the nation. You have stood

up manfully for the justice and humanity that are the hope of mankind and the commandment of God. We thank you for ourselves, for our children, for our country, and for our race, and we commend you to the providence and grace of Him who has always been with you, and who will be with you to the end.

"We present to you this address of congratulation, with signatures from all parts of the country, and with the proposal of a work of commemorative art that shall be sculptured with ideas and images from your poems, and be full of the grateful remembrances and affections of the friends who love you as a friend, and the nation that honors you as the patriarch of our literature."

Mr. Bryant then made the following brief and evidently unpremeditated reply :

"Mr. Sturges and Gentlemen : I thank you for the kind words referring to me in the address which has just been read, and am glad that you find it possible to speak of what I have done with so much indulgence. I have lived long, as it may seem to most people, however short the term appears to me when I look back upon it. In that period have occurred various most important changes, both political and social, and on the whole I am rejoiced to say that they have, as I think, im-

proved the condition of mankind. The people of civilized countries have become more enlightened and enjoy a greater degree of freedom. They have become especially more humane and sympathetic, more disposed to alleviate each others' sufferings. This is the age of charity. In our day charity has taken forms unknown to former ages, and occupied itself with the cure of evils which former generations neglected.

"I remember the time when Bonaparte filled the post of First Consul in the French Republic—for I began early to read the newspapers. I saw how that republic grew into an empire; how that empire enlarged itself by successive conquests on all sides, and how the mighty mass, collapsing by its own weight, fell into fragments. I have seen from that time to this change after change take place, and the result of them all, as it seems to me, is that the liberties and rights of the humbler classes have been more and more regarded, both in framing and executing the laws. For the greater part of my own eighty years it seemed to me, and I think it seemed to all, that the extinction of slavery was an event to be accomplished by a remote posterity. But all this time its end was approaching, and suddenly it sank into a bloody grave. The union of the Italian principalities under one head, and the

breaking up of that anomaly in politics, the possession of political power by a priesthood, seemed, during the greater part of the fourscore years of which I have spoken, an event belonging to a distant and uncertain future, yet was it drawing near by steps not apparent to the common eyes, and it came in our own day. The people of Italy willed it, and the people were obeyed.

"There is yet a time which good men earnestly hope and pray for—the day when the populations of the civilized world shall prepare for a universal peace by disbanding the enormous armies which they keep in camps and garrisons, and sending their soldiery back to the fields and workshops from which, if the people were wise, their sovereigns never should have withdrawn them. Let us hope that this will be one of the next great changes.

"Gentlemen, again I thank you for your kindness. I have little to be proud of, but when I look round upon those whom this occasion has brought together, I confess that I am proud of my friends."

While Mr. Bryant was speaking, the following telegram was received from Governor Dix:

"ALBANY, November 3, 1874.

"*To William Cullen Bryant:*

"I unite with your friends in the city of New York in cordial congratulations on this anniversary of your birth.

"JOHN A. DIX."

It is impossible to give but a small part of the names of the signers of the address, but the following hasty and imperfect selection will indicate the general, spontaneous, and cordial character of their token of respect, esteem, and friendship :

New York City : Benjamin G. Arnold, George S. Appleton, Charles Butler, James Brown, William A. Butler, D. W. Bishop, O. B. Bunce, P. T. Barnum, Julius Bing, Robert Carter, J. D. Champlin, George S. Coe, C. E. Detmold, Bowie Dash, W. J. Easton, Cortlandt de P. Field, Alfred H. Guernsey, Thomas Hillhouse, Roswell D. Hitchcock, Rossiter Johnson, William W. Kip, Richard A. McCurdy, Robert Morris, L. P. Morton, W. N. McVickar, R. Heber Newton, George Opdyke, William Orton, Richard Patrick, O. H. Palmer, Charles A. Peabody, T. M. Peters, George Ripley, John Cotton Smith, Joseph Seligman, Isaac Sherman, W. T. G. Shedd, Philip Schaff, C. C. Tiffany, Hugh Miller Thompson, Sinclair Tousey, W. M. Vermilye, Frederick S. Winston, George D. Wildes, John E. Williams, James Grant Wilson, Edward A. Washburn, E. L. Youmans.

Brooklyn : F. R. Schroeder, H. B. Claflin, E. H. R. Lyman, Demas Barnes, P. C. Cornell, Alden Wattles, Charles P. Chapin, C. T. Christensen, Josiah O. Low, James A. Briggs.

St. Louis : General William T. Sherman, and General Whipple, and Colonels Audenried and Tourtellotte, of his staff ; Wayman Crow, John R. Shepley, James E. Yeatman, S. T. Glover, Henry Hitchcock, Henry Pomeroy.

Chicago : Lyman Trumbull, Robert Collyer, David Swing, Horace White, W. E. Doggett, Charles Hitchcock, Charles A. Dupee, W. B. Ogden, Wirt Dexter, F. B. Peabody.

Philadelphia : A. J. Drexel, J. B. Lippincott, George W. Childs.

Worcester (Mass.): Alexander H. Bullock, Joseph Sargent, T. L. Nelson, George W. Richardson, Henry Chapin, W. W. Rice, E. B. Stoddard, Adin Thayer.

Williamstown (Mass.): Mark Hopkins, P. A. Chadbourne, Joseph White, Arthur L. Perry, Sanborn Tenney, Henry L. Sabin.

Providence (R. I.): Seth Padleford, Bishop Thomas M. Clark.

Hartford (Conn.): Joseph R. Hawley.

New Haven (Conn.): Charles R. Ingersoll, Noah Porter.

Stamford (Conn.): C. S. Henry.

Catskill (N. Y.): Samuel M. Cornell.

Rye (N. Y.): R. R. Anthony.

Garden City (N. Y.): John E. Irwin.

Flushing (N. Y.): F. Elliman.

Troy (N. Y.): D. L. Boardman.

Bergen (N. J.): George Z. Gray, Thomas B. Bickwell.

Newark (N. J.): E. C. Benedict, S. W. Corwin, S. H. Johnson.

Montclair (N. J.): J. Romeyn Bury, jr., George H. Ripley.

Orange (N. J.): Charles A. Meguire, J. M. Meredith.

Roselle (N. J.): M. R. Hibbard.

Milburn (N. J.): J. R. Hopkins.

New Brunswick (N. J.): Oscar Johnson, jr.

Morristown (N. J.): John D. Stewart.

Plainfield (N. J.): Frederick E. Busby, R. B. Brown.

Tenafly (N. J.): George F. Lyman.

Minnesota: Bishop H. B. Whipple.

Dacotah: Bishop William H. Hare.

Vienna (Austria): John Jay.

The Committee received letters from Mr. John Taylor Johnston and Rev. Dr. H. C. Potter, of

their number, regretting their unavoidable absence on the occasion. The following is the letter of Dr. Potter:

"Grace Church Rectory,
Monday Evening.

"Dear Sir: I am heartily sorry that to-morrow is the last day of the session of our General Convention, and that my engagements as Secretary of the House of Bishops will require my incessant attention throughout the day.

"I cannot, therefore, accompany the Committee who are to wait upon Mr. Bryant, but my sympathies will follow them on their most appropriate and becoming errand, and I shall account it a kindness if you will convey to Mr. Bryant my congratulations and the expression of my unfeigned regret that I am prevented from tendering them in person.

"Very faithfully yours,
"H. C. POTTER.

"Jonathan Sturges, Esq."

A number of poems addressed to Mr. Bryant were also received by the Committee; among them the two following, the first from Mr. Charles K. Tuckerman, now in London, England, and the second from Rev. Dr. Horatio N. Powers, of Chicago:

TO WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,

ON THE EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTHDAY.

A Tribute from an American Abroad.

The silver wheels of thy melodious years
Have rolled thee to the laurel post again:

Again our eager hands renew the crown ;
Again our mingling voices utter thanks.
We thank thee for the plenitude of fame
Which riseth o'er the landscape of thy life
Like the New England pine, serenely strong,
Filling the autumn air with scent of balm.
We thank thee for the good thou hast conferred
At times when Poets' thoughts are best for man,
Speeding the idle hour with swift delight,
Soothing the sorrowing hour with calm of peace.
We thank thee in their names, the weary ones,
When, lying sleepless with solicitude,
They have bethought them of thy melody—
Those unaffected, simply-flowing strains,
So clear in their conception, yet so vast
In comprehensive wisdom—and have risen
And sought the book, and with thee moved awhile
Over the meadows and by running streams
And under fragrant boughs of singing trees,
Till, lost, like children, in the sylvan scene,
They've closed the page and dreamed they had no cares.

Thy walk has ever been towards heaven, Great Heart !
And when thou goest in, methinks the sound
Of upper voices will accord with thine
As if a missing tone were found again.
Even in thy youth, alone and undismayed,
Fair Nature found thee on her mountain heights
Singing the songs of freedom : or in groves—
Those consecrated temples of thy choice—
Chanting the unpremeditated prayer
Born of poetic faith and reverend love.
Not thine the dusty-footed pilgrimage

In quest of inspiration ; no far clime
Lends thee its book of beauty ; but at home,
In the warm midst of its familiar scenes,
Thy harp-strings sing the sweetest. All around
The forms of recognition welcome thee :
The laughing rivulet, with morning light,
"Comes singing down the narrow glen" to thee ;
The water-fowl, "lone wandering but not lost,"
Sees thee and feels no fear : at thy approach
The timorous squirrel, busy with its nut,
Sits undisturbed : "The century-living crow"
Caws at thy coming—thou, whose flight of fame
Shall far outdistance all his length of years—
And to thy listening ear the evening wind,
With "strange deep harmonies" reveals itself.
These shall thy mourners be when thou art gone,
These, and the hearts of wild flowers and of waves,
These, and the hearts of sunbeams and of stars,
For these dost thou interpret unto man :
Drawing him closer to the throbbing breast
Of purifying Nature.

Not in vain
Doth her beneficent wisdom lengthen out
Thy days of ministration, for thy days
Are verses of the everlasting hymn
She teacheth ever to the hearts of those
Who, "to the beautiful order of her works
Conform," like thee, "the order of their lives."

London, October, 1874. C. K. T.

TO WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT,

ON THE EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS BIRTHDAY,
NOVEMBER 3, 1874.

The sweetest blossoms any bring
To-day, to deck thy muse's throne,
Are those that out of pure hearts spring,
From seed thy fruitful life has sown.

How deep thy living thoughts struck down
In countless souls throughout the land!
The splendid flowers of thy renown
In myriad leaves of light expand.

They bloom in virtues strong and true,
In deeds that make our kinship sweet,
Chaste homes, and lives of spotless hue,
In love that serves with tireless feet;

In patriot zeal, in Honor's breast;
Where Duty runs without debate;
Where Nature feasts her reverent guest,
And Faith waits calmly "at the gate."

These garlands of the spirit live,
While festal splendors pass away—
Millions their fadeless tribute give
To thee, O wondrous seer! to-day.

Thanks for thy pure, majestic song,
Thy golden years o'er measured span,
Thy valiant will to smite the wrong,
Thy vast unconquered love of man.

Thanks for thy simple faith and truth ;
Thanks for thy wisdom, deep and calm,
The freshness of thy generous youth,
Thy life—a sweet triumphant psalm !

Earth's children catch its strain sublime,
As ages onward bear thy name,
And down the glowing fields of time
The wise and good reflect thy fame !

CHICAGO, 1874. HORATIO N. POWERS.

Mr. Bryant was in his place as Vice-President of the Historical Society last evening. At the close of the meeting, after the reading of the interesting paper upon Historical Portraits in Paris, by Mr. William J. Hoppin, Mr. James W. Beekman moved a resolution of thanks to Mr. Bryant for the honor of his presence, and of congratulation to him upon reaching eighty years of age that day, and the whole audience accepted the resolution with acclamation and by rising.

At Chicago, last evening, the anniversary was celebrated by a "Bryant Testimonial Dinner" of the Chicago Literary Club.—*Evening Post*, November 4, 1874.

TRIBUTES OF THE PRESS.

The following are some of the grateful tributes of the American press on the occasion :

[New York *Times*, November 4.]

It is pleasant to turn from the din of the elections to an interesting social incident, which we record with greater pleasure

than Democratic victories. Yesterday Mr. William Cullen Bryant completed his eightieth year, and received from the members of the Century Club a congratulatory address, expressive of the esteem and affection with which he is regarded. Nor are these sentiments confined to the members of the club; they are shared by the general public, which has long been familiar with Mr. Bryant's honorable services to the literature of the country. A life more useful and industrious, or more blameless, has seldom been spent among us, and we hope that the day is still distant when it will be brought to a close. Such greetings as those which Mr. Bryant received yesterday are worth far more to a man than all the wealth and official honors in the world.

[New York *Sun*, November 3.]

Mr. William Cullen Bryant, now the most eminent citizen of this State, is eighty years old to-day, and, we are happy to say, is perfectly vigorous and active in mind and body. May he still be continued "waiting at the gate" among us for many years to come.

[New York *Tribune*, November 4.]

Yesterday will be a memorable date in this country for a better reason than can be found in the defeat or success of any transitory political organization; for on that day William Cullen Bryant completed his eightieth year. In the joy with which his fellow-citizens contemplate the advance of his serene and glorious age, there is no tinge of sadness. No one who sees the hale poet in his daily walks ever looks forward to the day when his grand career will be ended. We are forced to disobey the precept of the Greek sage and call this life a happy one before it closes. There are no chances readily discernible, even to the eye of fancy, which can dim the tranquil beauty of the long and rosy evening promised to this great poet and

good citizen. His birthdays are kept as holidays in the hearts of all who know him, and every succeeding one grows dearer and more sacred.

[New York *Herald*, November 4.]

William Cullen Bryant, the most venerable and honored member of the editorial profession in this country, the first of our poets, the model of every public and every private virtue, completed his eightieth year yesterday. We join our congratulations with those of his other admirers on an occasion of so much interest. Mr. Bryant has outlived Cooper, our first novelist; he has outlived Irving, our greatest master of elegant prose; he has outlived Jackson, Clay, Calhoun, Webster, the most gifted statesmen who were conspicuous in the active period of his life; he has outlived Bennett, and Greeley, and Noah, and Crosswell, and Ritchie, and Gales (but not Blair, who still lives at an age as advanced and with facilities as vigorous as Mr. Bryant's, nor Weed, who is nearly as old); but if several of Mr. Bryant's distinguished journalistic contemporaries, who were so potent and so vigorous in the days of his prime, still survive, he is the only one of them who retains an active connection with journalism. Mr. Blair dissolved his editorial relation to the *Globe* nearly thirty years ago, and retired to Silver Spring. It is some thirteen or fourteen years since Mr. Weed retired from the Albany *Journal* and Mr. Webb from the *Courier and Enquirer*, so that Mr. Bryant is the oldest editor in the United States who retains his connection with the press. We tender him our sincere congratulations on this anniversary, and recognize him as the most distinguished member of the editorial profession in the United States. Mr. Bryant's reputation is less ephemeral than if it rested on his services as a journalist. His is one of the most important names in American literature, as well as in American jour-

nalism, and the tasteful compliment paid him yesterday, in the presentation of a costly and appropriately engraved vase, was a tribute to his literary eminence, the only character in which he will be much known to posterity. His vigorous editorials in the *Evening Post* for so many years merely influenced the passing opinions of the day; but his best poems will be read and loved long after the transient politics of Mr. Bryant's time are forgotten. In celebrating his eightieth birthday we recognize the superior luster of purely literary merits; but if Mr. Bryant himself were to pronounce on his own career we have little doubt that he would give the preference to his patriotic attempts to serve the country as a journalist.

[New York *Graphic*, November 2.]

To-morrow, the eightieth birthday of William Cullen Bryant will be remembered by his numerous friends in a manner at once unique and creditable. They have contributed some five thousand dollars for a vase of original design and choice workmanship, artistically representing the lessons of his career, in its literary, political, and journalistic relations, and the vase will be placed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The money has been contributed by gentlemen in other cities as well as our own, and the testimonial will be the spontaneous expression of public respect and veneration for our oldest living poet. Charles Sprague is his senior by several years, but Sprague has written comparatively little, and has scarcely more than a local fame. Whittier is thought of as one of our oldest poets, but he was born in the same year as Longfellow, and both were mere schoolboys when "Thanatopsis" was written. Greeley was Bryant's junior by seventeen years, and was a printer on the paper after Mr. Bryant became editor. He was born during the administration of Washington, and his life covers all the literature of the country that anybody cares to remember. His

own works are among the best productions of the American mind, and whatever he may think of "Thanatopsis"—which was written in his nineteenth year—it is one of the few American poems that the people will never let die.

Mr. Bryant has been connected with New York journalism for half a century, first as editor of the New York *Review*, and next as editor of the *Evening Post*. Of his signal ability, industry, and other journalistic qualities, it is needless to remark. They are well known, and have gained for him the respect of the country. His paper early won a high place for its literary merit, its sound judgment on financial questions, its courtesy towards opponents, and its high moral tone. Mr. Bryant early became a champion of the free-trade policy. His paper represented the best Democratic sentiment of the city for a long period of years, and only broke with that party to support the Republicans in the conduct of the war. And though he has written little for it of late years, the character he gave it and the honorable traditions affixed to its name by his conduct, give it an influence far out of proportion to its intellectual weight or circulation. It is one of the institutions of New York, and the new building, now in process of erection, will stand as a fitting monument of his industrious and honorable career. It is a pity that a niche is not reserved in its walls for his statue, as his name will be identified with the paper while it is published. But Mr. Bryant has been more than a journalist. He has taken an active part in the movements of the day, and most important charities of the city. His life has been pure, and his influence high-toned and honorable. His character is a precious possession, and his life teaches a lesson of temperance and virtue.

[*The Independent.*]

Sir Walter Scott relates that, when some one was mentioned as a "fine old man" to Dean Swift, he exclaimed with violence

that there was no such thing. "If the man you speak of had either a mind or a body worth a farthing they would have worn him out long ago." Voltaire, Goethe, Lyndhurst, Brougham, Béranger, Humboldt, Palmerston, Guizot, Moltke, and among Americans, Adams, Taney, Winfield Scott, Horace Binney, Richard H. Dana, may be cited in refutation of this theory, which, we presume, has nothing to do with thews or stature. But if we wanted another bright and brilliant example of faculties, and faculties of a high order, remaining unimpaired in mind and body till long past the grand climacteric, we might name William Cullen Bryant, the patriarch of American poetry, who, on Tuesday, November 3, completed his "fourscore years," cheerful and happy and full of conversation, and continuing to heartily enjoy what Dr. Johnson happily calls "the sunshine of life."

No name in our contemporaneous literature, either in England or in America, is crowned with more successful honors than that of William Cullen Bryant. Born at a period when our colonial literature, like our people, was but recently under the dominion of Great Britain, he has lived to see that literature expand from its infancy and take a proud place in the republic of letters, and survived to see the Republic itself, starting from its revolutionary birth, spring up to a giant power, after passing triumphantly through a giant rebellion. Surrounded by such historical and heroic associations, men who survive them embody in their lives the annals of a people, and represent in their individuality the history of a nation.

What Macaulay said of Charles, Earl Grey—alluding to his having survived all the great statesmen contemporaneous with him—might with equal propriety be applied to Bryant and his contemporaries: "He is the sole surviving link of an age which has passed away." Bryant saw Cooper, in the full glory of his renown, lead the host of historic names in our national literature,

and then followed in succession to an honored tomb by Irving, Prescott, Paulding, Halleck, Simms, and Kennedy. The orator on the occasion of the funeral honors paid to the pioneer of American novelists, Mr. Bryant, was associated in the performance of those rites with the renowned Webster, and the hall which had resounded with applause to the eloquence of Kossuth and to the matchless melodies of Jenny Lind, re-echoed the brilliant poetic periods of Bryant in commemoration of his contemporary and friend, Fenimore Cooper.

Pursuing to the age of fourscore an active literary career, the poet has been a co-laborer in all worthy movements to promote the advancement of the arts and literature. A liberal patron of art himself, he has always been the eloquent advocate of the claims of artists. Mr. Bryant, on its completion, a few years ago, delivered the address inaugurating the beautiful temple to art of the New York Academy of Design. Foremost in the literary circle of his adopted city, he is President of the Century Club—a time-honored institution of New York—numbering among the poet's predecessors Gulian C. Verplanck and George Bancroft, and embracing among its members men of letters, artists, and leading gentlemen of the liberal professions. Philanthropic in his nature, Mr. Bryant has been the consistent promoter of all objects having for their tendency the elevation and furtherance of the interests of humanity. Connected with one of the leading metropolitan journals, and one of the oldest in the United States, he is enabled to bring the powerful influence of the press to bear, with his own personal influence and literary renown, upon whatever measure he supports in the cause of philanthropy, letters, and the promotion of arts.

Some men seem gifted of Nature with the very purple bloom of immortality—in their youth old and wise beyond their years, and retaining in their age the warm fire and young vigor of early

manhood. Their boyhood anticipates the wisdom of years, and their years retain the freshness of youth. "I have often wondered," said Benjamin Franklin, in his address on the last day of the convention which framed our Constitution, "whether yonder picture on the wall represents the rising or the setting sun." And, had we not the calendar of his years to inform us, we should have been in doubt whether the "Thanatopsis" might not be the meditation of William Cullen Bryant's age and the Homeric translations the work of his vigorous youth. Poets make age the climax of hopeless evil. Gray saw before the heedless schoolboy sickness, poverty, famine, and worst and last of all, "slow, consuming age;" and Milton, in his last years, hunted and dishonored, knew but one thing more pitiful:

> "Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
> Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!"

But by some strange favor of Heaven we see now and then a son of the gods who in his cradle has the strength to strangle serpents, and whose unconsuming years seem to feed on the ambrosia of perpetual youth.

On our first page we have given, through our contributors, our good hail on his eightieth birthday to the still youthful veteran poet and journalist of America. Here we need say little more than to tender to him most heartily our own congratulations and those of all our readers, and to tell him how warmly his countrymen respect and love him.

Much as we admire the poet whose verse made him many years ago the first of our bards, we would mention it as his especial honor that he has not been satisfied with beauty or sentiment, but has, like England's blind poet, made himself a man of affairs, and has been a wise counsellor in the conduct of the State. If he has been known for sixty-two years as a poet, he has been an editor for forty-nine years, and his first published

political paper was written sixty-seven years ago. Other poets have not forgotten that they were citizens. Longfellow for a year or two sang songs of freedom, asking—

——"What holy angel
Brings the slave this glad evangel?"

and Whittier, most like Bryant, was for many years an editor and active philanthropist; but in the case of no other of our writers have poetry and politics held the scale in such even balance. The first political paper of his, "The Embargo," a satire in verse, was the prophecy of his life. The *Evening Post*, the wisest and soundest of all our newspapers, the most influential certainly of our afternoon press, has long been edited by William Cullen Bryant, with whom Iliads, and Congresses, and reconstructions, and impeachments, and Odysseys, seem to be objects of impartial interest. For this we especially admire him —for that completeness of taste and culture, too rare in America, which unites a care for the public weal with a love for letters and learning. Were our men of culture generally to take Milton and Bryant as their examples, we should have less reason to complain of the corruption of public life.

Personally, Mr. Bryant is known to the American people as a poet. As a poet his monument will ever be their affectionate respect. Nothing more can a poet ask. But a journalist is a man without personality. His identity is swallowed up in his paper. As a journalist, Mr. Bryant's fitting memorial will be that more material but less substantial one, the fine building on Broadway erecting for the *Evening Post*. Waiting and hoping for the time when our own journal shall be similarly provided for, we heartily congratulate both the excellent veteran paper and the excellent veteran editor on this proof of wise management and public appreciation, and hope that the time is not near when William Cullen Bryant shall cease to sharpen his

youthful quill in rebuke of the follies of false statecraft, or shall forget the cunning which has taught him to paint the grace of running brooks and the majesty of forest trees.

May the October of his life be that which he has himself described :

"Wind of the sunny South ! oh, still delay
In the gay woods and in the golden air,
Like to a good old age released from care,
Journeying, in long serenity, away.
In such a bright, late quiet would that I
Might wear out life like thee, 'mid bowers and brooks,
And, dearer yet, the sunshine of kind looks
And music of kind voices ever nigh !
And, when my last sand twinkled in the glass,
Pass silently from men, as thou dost pass."

[Troy *Times*, November 3.]

This is the eightieth birthday of the venerable poet and editor, William Cullen Bryant. We are glad to hear that his friends are to commemorate the event by the presentation of a valuable and artistically designed vase. Few men have lived so long as Mr. Bryant with equal blamelessness and honor. We are glad to know that he is still hale and hearty, and promises to remain with us for some time to come.

[Rochester *Express*, November 3.]

William Cullen Bryant, the venerable and distinguished poet, becomes an octogenarian to-day. Mr. Bryant is one of the purest and noblest of Americans. Achieving fame, while still a young man, by that poem of solemn beauty, "Thanatopsis," he has, during a long life, stood before the world exemplifying in his character and his works the truest qualities of manhood

and genius. During the formative period of our literary history he gave to his countrymen an example of thought and style which, by its purity and elegance, first afforded a rebuking contrast to the buncombe and spread-eagleism of our early writings, and then, with the writings of Washington Irving and others of his class, steadily and surely permeated American thought, and won admirers and imitators among our aspirants for literary fame, until a higher and truer school of authorship was created. Bryant does not rank among the greatest writers, but few excel him in purity of thought and expression. For him the world of thoughtful readers entertain a sincere affection, and though his works that will go far into the future are few, yet there are passages and even entire poems that have the gift and destiny of immortal fame.

Long as the poet has been among us, yet hale and vigorous he enters upon the ninth decade of life, and from two continents will pour in upon him congratulations for his lengthened life, and sincere wishes that it may be prolonged until he and his friends may celebrate his centennial.

[Boston *Transcript*, November 3.]

William Cullen Bryant, poet, patriot, editor, man of letters; the American citizen, whom all American citizens honor for his blameless private and his fruitful public life; still in the possession of unabated natural and acquired mental and moral forces; still active in a venerableness that surpasses the beauty of youth and manhood, to the eyes of troops of loving and revering friends, to-day becomes an octogenarian. It is an occasion that will be gratefully seized upon to extend to him warm and rich testimonials of regard, expressed in words of affectionate respect and in significant and artistic symbolic gifts.

Independent, upright, a lover of truth and beauty, of charac-

ter unstained, gradually closing a long career whose evening has gathered up and preserved not a little of the fair light and brilliancy of its midday—he merits indeed an anniversary to be rendered truly golden, in his native and in other lands, by esteem for a manifold greatness, of unquestioned integrity, free from all low ambitions, full to overflowing with usefulness to his times and humanity, by the prolonged manifestations of genius consecrated to high aims, and the work of talents and learning devoted to the advancement of whatever contributes to the genuine nobility, the sterling virtues, and the refined adornments to true living ; a vigorous and almost saintly patriarch, whose silver locks need no crown of gold and jewels to make him a king among his fellows, by reason of the divinity of his unwearied and multiform faithfulness.

[Boston *Advertiser*, November 3.]

TO BRYANT AT FOURSCORE.

Born November 3, 1794.

Psalm xc. 10.

Poet, whose voice is of the winds and woods,
Whose calm verse flows as does the mountain rill,
Rippling and murmuring through the shade and sheen,
And o'er the cool, clean stone ;
Poet, whose voice is of the ocean floods,
When thou dost hear, along the wooded hill,
The footsteps of the Lord, and thou may'st lean
To listen, stilled, alone—
Nature's Interpreter—the wind, the stream, the tree,
The human soul, all find a friend in thee.

Thine is the music of the fountain's flow,
Or Autumn's wind, fresh in the fading tree :
Men quicken at thy word ; they feel thee nigh—
One dear to childhood's day.
Thou art a stream born of the mountain snow,

Which sought, unsoiled, the city by the sea,
Winding where fair things fail and pure things die ;
And springing, white with spray,
A fountain where, despite the multitudinous tread,
Faith is refreshed and faint hearts comforted.

Bryant ! thy word is best when thou dost write
Of life, of hopes, of human destiny—
Of the grave joy which keeps the heart content—
Of Nature's constant calm !
Comforter, thou dost show the Infinite !
Thou dost unseal the fount when eyes are dry
And hearts are breaking ! Thy wise words are blent
With weeping ; and a Psalm
Of Life goes up, and not unheard : while thou dost sing,
Hearts grateful, though unseen, shall listen lingering.

So shall men listen when all these are gone :
Still shalt thou sing when the invisible vail
Hath wrapped thee from man's vision. Lightly lie
On thee thy years fourscore !
In thine eternal youth thou shalt sing on ;
Thy strain, a voice of Nature, shall not fail ;
And thee labor and sorrow come not nigh !
But when the silent oar
Of Charon stirs, not too late or soon, that voiceless sea,
Wake to thy twofold immortality.

H. C. B.